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Fifty-fifth year

Letter dated 28 November 2000 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, please find enclosed herewith a message addressed to you from Mustafa Osman Ismail, Minister of External Relations of the Republic of the Sudan (see annex).

I would be grateful if you could have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 20 (b), and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Elfatih **Erwa**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 28 November 2000 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic]

I am writing to convey to you the great concern and indignation of the Sudanese Government at a grave violation of the country's sovereignty and domestic laws committed by a major Power that is a Member of the United Nations. It concerns the entry of United States Assistant Secretary of State Susan E. Rice, accompanied by a delegation of United States officials, into Sudanese territory on Sunday, 19 November, and Monday, 20 November 2000, without the permission of the Sudanese Government, thereby violating the domestic laws and international norms that govern the movement of persons between States.

The action taken by Ms. Rice and her entourage cannot be justified and is incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations and all the domestic and international enactments that regulate matters relating to the movement of persons and require them to obtain the necessary visas from the governments concerned. The gravity of the unprecedented violation committed by this United States official is further exacerbated by the special responsibility that devolves on the United States of America by virtue of its being a permanent member of the Security Council and thus presumed to be all the more committed to respecting the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and to safeguarding its purposes and principles.

This irresponsible step by the United States came at a time when the Sudan's capital was hosting summit-level meetings of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), in which seven member States participated as well as the ministers for foreign affairs of other African States and of States belonging to the IGAD Partners Forum. The question of peace in the Sudan was at the top of the summit's agenda, given that IGAD is the sponsor of the peace process in the Sudan and it receives much-valued support from the States of the IGAD Partners Forum. Since the United States of America is a member of the Forum, it had been hoped that it would play a more positive role by demonstrating its impartiality as an honest mediator between the parties to the conflict in the Sudan. This major Power, however, which often speaks of its sincere efforts to bring peace to the Sudan, did not hesitate to choose a timing for an illegal, unjustifiable and unnecessary visit to Sudanese territory that was calculated to cause offence, thus confirming the Sudan's repeated assertions that the United States is biased and that it provides financial and logistic support to the rebel movement and is thus unfit to play the role of mediator in the efforts to bring peace.

It is known to all those countries interested in the cause of peace in the Sudan that the United States, using flimsy pretexts and excuses, has constantly and forcefully refused to respond positively to the initiatives of the Sudanese Government to declare a ceasefire in the areas of operations in southern Sudan. Indeed, the United States endeavours to obstruct these initiatives in every possible way, and it is seeking, in the final analysis, to extend protection to the rebel movement and to use it as an instrument to promote its own agenda in the region, regardless of the suffering and the innocent victims that may cost.

The United States, in having the audacity to violate the national sovereignty of the Republic of the Sudan, once again demonstrates that it has no regard for

domestic or international regulations and pays no heed to the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations as they relate to the need to safeguard international peace and security. Perhaps the most eloquent testimony to the systematic use of double standards by the United States is its peremptory rejection of the assignment of a team to investigate the allegations that led to the attack on the Shifa pharmaceutical plant in Khartoum on 20 August 1998. The United States did this heinous deed on the basis of fabricated and erroneous information and in domestic circumstances of its own that are well known to all. It has continued to reject even a simple inquiry into the circumstances of a grievous attack that targeted a peaceable civilian installation performing its role of providing more than 50 per cent of the Sudan's drug requirements for both human and veterinary use.

The United States of America continues to give every indication that it is committed to policies of hypocrisy and to action to impose its imperialist, blood-sucking agenda to the detriment of the world's peoples. It then sheds crocodile tears and uses double standards when it is a question of its own interests or protégés. Despite the clamour raised by the United States in international and other forums concerning the need to protect civilians in time of military conflict, we meet with a suspicious silence from the same major Power when it is a matter of a United States protectorate that is bombing and otherwise targeting civilians, including children, women and elderly persons, in the occupied Palestinian territories in full view of an entire world that is following this appalling spectacle as it is carried live on television screens in a manner that requires no further proof.

As it condemns in the strongest terms the surreptitious entry of Ms. Rice and her entourage into its territory in flagrant violation of the relevant domestic and international laws, the Sudan requests you to draw the attention of the United States Government to the fact that it has taken a grave step that is incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations and asks you to alert the Security Council so that it may exercise in full its responsibilities in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter. The Sudan further reserves the right to take the appropriate measures for the defence of its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

(*Signed*) Mustafa Osman **Ismail**
Minister of External Relations